EXPEDITED PROCEDURE – EXAMINING GROUP 2163

S/N 10/600,861 **PATENT**

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	Hsiaozhang Bill Wang	Examiner: Uyen T. Le
Serial No.:	10/600,861	Group Art Unit: 2163
Filed:	June 19, 2003	Docket No.: 2043.030US3
Title:	GENERIC ATTRIBUTE DATABASE SYSTEM	

AMENDMENT & RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.116

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Commissioner for Patents
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Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

In response to the Final Office Action mailed January 12, 2006, please amend the application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Previously Presented) A system for providing a network-based marketplace, the system including:

an information server to present listings to users, each listing belonging to a category and having one or more associated attributes; and,

a database component having an attribute value table, the attribute value table to store attribute values for a plurality of the listings independent of the category to which each listing of the plurality of the listings belongs.

2. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1, including an attribute map table to store attribute map values, each attribute map value to determine how a particular attribute value is displayed with an associated listing.

3. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 2, wherein each attribute map value is to determine a position of the attribute value within an output display.

4. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 2, wherein each attribute map value is to determine a display length of the attribute value within an output display.

5. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1, including an attribute validity table having attribute validity values, the attribute validity values to determine validity of the attribute values associated with a particular listing.

6. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 5, wherein the attribute validity table includes maximum range values and minimum range values, the maximum range values and minimum range values to determine a valid numerical range of an attribute value associated with a particular listing.

7. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon one or more database data structures for a system providing a network-based marketplace, the database data structures including:

one or more database tables to store a plurality of listings, each listing belonging to a category and having one or more associated attributes, the attributes having attribute types, wherein at least one attribute of the one or more associated attributes is shared across at least two different categories; and,

an attribute value table to store attribute values for [[a]] the plurality of the listings independent of the category to which each listing of the plurality of the listings belongs, wherein during a separate data processing operation, attribute values for the one or more associated attributes are accessed using a column of the attribute value table corresponding to the attribute type.

8. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 7, wherein the one or more database data structures further include an attribute map table to store attribute map values, each attribute map value to determine how a particular attribute value is displayed with an associated listing.

9. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 8, wherein each attribute map value is to determine the position of the attribute value within an output display.

10. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 8, wherein each attribute map value is to determine the display length of the attribute value within an output display.

11. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 7, wherein the one or more database data structures further include an attribute validity table having attribute validity values, the attribute validity values to determine validity of the attribute values associated with a particular listing.

12. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the attribute validity table includes maximum range values and minimum range values, the maximum range values and minimum range values to determine a valid numerical range of an attribute value associated with a particular listing.

13. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented method including:

receiving a request for a listing, the listing belonging to a category and having one or more associated attributes;

retrieving the requested listing from a database table;

retrieving attribute values for the associated attributes of the listing from an attribute value table, the attribute value table storing attribute values for a plurality of listings independent of the category to which each listing of the plurality of listings belongs; and,

displaying the listing and the associated attribute values.

14. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 13, including:

retrieving one or more attribute map values from an attribute map table, the attribute map values to determine how a particular attribute value is displayed with an associated listing.

15. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 14, wherein the attribute map values determine a position of the attribute value within an output display.

16. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 14, wherein the attribute map values determine a display length of the attribute value within an output display.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method including:

storing a listing in a database table, the listing belonging to one of a plurality of categories and having one or more associated attributes;

mapping the one or more associated attributes to one or more columns in an attribute value table; and

storing an attribute value for the listing in [[an]] the attribute value table according to the mapping, wherein the attribute value table is to store attribute values for a plurality of listings independent of a respective category to which any single listing belongs.

18. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 17, including:

storing an attribute map value in an attribute map table, the attribute map value to determine how the attribute value is displayed with an associated listing.

19. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 18, including:

storing an attribute validity value in an attribute validity table, the attribute validity value to determine validity of the attribute value associated with the listing.

20. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 18, including:

storing maximum range values and minimum range values in the attribute validity table, the maximum range values and minimum range values to determine a valid numerical range of the attribute value associated with the listing.

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action mailed on January 12, 2006.

Claims 7 and 17 are amended, no claims are canceled or added; as a result, claims 1-20 remain pending in this application.

Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1-20 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over claims 1-15 of U.S. Patent No. 6,778,993. Applicant does not admit that the claims would improperly extend the "right to exclude" already granted in U.S. Patent No. 6,778,993 as asserted in the rejection. In order to expedite prosecution, Applicant is submitting a Terminal Disclaimer with this response. Applicant respectfully submits that the Terminal Disclaimer overcomes the double patenting rejection. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-20.

§101 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 7-12 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as not meeting the utility requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 101. In particular, with respect to claims 7-12, the Office Action states that "the body of claims 7-12 recites mere non-functional descriptive material which does not meet the requirement of a data structure recited in the preamble." Applicant submits that the claims as amended recite functional descriptive material. For example, claim 7 as amended recites "an attribute value table to store attribute values for the plurality of the listings independent of the category to which each listing of the plurality of the listings belongs, wherein during a separate data processing operation, attribute values for the one or more associated attributes are accessed using a column of the attribute value table corresponding to the attribute type." As indicated by the recited language, the attribute value table comprises a data base table structure having column structure where the attribute values are mapped into columns of the table according to an attribute type. Thus the claim provides functional descriptive language and corresponding structure describing the database table data structure. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 7.

Claims 8-12 depend from claim 7, and therefore inherit the structure recited in claim 7, and provide further patentable structural and functional elements. These dependent claims are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 7.

With respect to claims 17-20, the Office Action states that "the claimed method does not seem to produce any useful, concrete and tangible result." Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, because claims 17-20 produce a useful, concrete and tangible result. For example, claim 17 recites "storing an attribute value for the listing in the attribute value table according to the mapping, wherein the attribute value table is to store attribute values for a plurality of listings independent of a respective category to which any single listing belongs." Storing a value is clearly a useful concrete and tangible result. Storing a value is concrete and tangible, because a database on a computer system is concrete and tangible. In fact, the whole point of a database is to provide for the persistent storage of values, thereby making a database concrete and tangible. Storing a value according to a mapping is useful, because as noted in the specification at paragraph 16, such a mapping provides for a database that includes attributes that can be shared across different categories of products, thereby allowing for fewer numbers of tables to be designed, created and maintained. In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 17 provides a useful, concrete and tangible result, and is therefore statutory under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 17.

Claims 18-20 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 17. These dependent claims add further patentable useful, concrete and tangible results to those already provided in claim 17. These dependent claims are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 17.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney (612) 373-6954 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date June 12, 2006

By /Rodney L. Lacy/
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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR § 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being filed using the USPTO's electronic filing system EFS-Web, and is addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 12th day of June 2006.

Name: Rodney L. Lacy Signature: /Rodney L. Lacy/